

Commonwealth Solar

Governor Patrick recently announced a new initiative to help more businesses and homeowners take advantage of clean, renewable energy from the sun. The new Commonwealth Solar program is offering rebates that can help defray 30-50 percent of the costs for eligible businesses and 20-60 percent of the costs for homeowners to install solar electric systems. Rebate applications will be available beginning January 23, 2008.

To receive more information about the details of this program, please submit your email address at www.masstech.org/solar.

Commonwealth Solar will provide funding to customers using a simple, rolling application process offering rebates to owners of commercial, industrial, institutional, municipal, and residential property who install solar electric systems. The rebate levels will be based on the amount of solar capacity that is installed.

Residential projects will be funded up to 5 kilowatts of capacity. There will be special incentives for households with moderate incomes.

Rebates for non-residential projects will have a tiered rebate structure based on the size of the system (i.e. as a system's size increases, its rebate per kilowatt will decline). These systems will also have a financial cap. The program will include greater incentives for projects on public buildings and ones that incorporate Massachusetts manufactured products. Commonwealth Solar will be available to projects directly owned by the applicant as well as those financed through a third-party ownership model that takes advantage of federal and state tax credits.

The goal of Commonwealth Solar is to install 27 megawatts of solar across the state. By expanding the amount of solar electricity installed in Massachusetts, the initiative will support the growing Massachusetts solar industry which includes solar panel manufacturers, solar inverter manufacturers, and solar installers. In addition, the program will contribute to the state's renewable energy and climate change goals.

The state is committing \$68 million over the next four years through existing ratepayer funds for renewable energy. The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative will dedicate \$10 million per year from the Renewable Energy Trust in partnership with the Massachusetts Division of Energy Resources, which is committing \$28 million from the Alternative Compliance Payment fund. Because these funds were collected from customers of investor-owned electric utilities and were not collected from customers of municipal light plants, only customers of investor-owned electric utilities are eligible to receive rebates.

Solar power is an important part of the state's strategy to build a cleaner energy future. For more information, please visit www.masstech.org/solar.